

# ***In a Sheltering Place***

## Art Connects New York at Marcus Gardens

Curated by Karen Fitzgerald

Shelter means many things. It evokes protection, suggesting much more than a physically safe place. When we are sheltered, we can turn toward comfort, peace and rest, because we know we are safe. In the widest sense, our natural world is our sheltering place, giving us air, and protecting us from raw, black space. Our natural world also shelters us in the sense of offering the experience of beauty. Several artists share these experiences through their landscape work. John Day, Marla Lipkin, Ellen Mandelbaum and Rosetta Bentz present views of the land that suggest peacefulness and create a sense of calm.

A literal shelter recalls the world of the built environment. From huts to houses to grand architectonic space, what the human race builds provides shelter and then some! A roof over our heads keeps us dry; and in this same space the mind might also be sheltered, guided, enlightened, encouraged. Liz Quisgard's installation of patterned panels conjurs a grand space – the arch of a doorway, or the swelling space beneath a dome. Mary Pinto's simple photogram of a house recalls all the complex and rich associations we might have to houses.

A place that shelters can also be realized as something that is internal to each of us. Our beliefs and our faith are embedded within ourselves and provide shelter from the confusion of living in a modern world. Carol Schille's Prayer Flags are watercolors in which she has stripped all information from the picture, except for these Buddhist flags, fading in the sun, and blowing in the breeze. The paintings don't tell us what prayers were written on the flag. They don't tell us where the flags are (or were) flying, or who set these flags out. And yet, like a poem, these paintings remind us of the simple act of prayer, the energy of which can change everything. The connections that artwork fosters strengthen us. These connections shelter us in many ways; discovery of these places is just one artwork away.